Quarterly Population Report

Third Quarter 2015

Weakening interprovincial migration puts a damper on Alberta's growth[1]

Alberta led the country in population growth in the third quarter by a slim margin, posting the strongest growth. However, Alberta's weakening economy coupled with gathering strength in other jurisdictions has triggered a slowing of population growth from the highs of the past few years. The robust growth of this quarter was partly attributable to record levels of immigrants. Natural increase also continued to make a large contribution to growth in the third quarter.

As of October 1, the province's population was 4,216,875 (Table 1), an increase of about 20,500 over the previous quarter. Alberta's nation-leading quarterly growth of 0.49% was well above the Canadian average (0.37%). Net international migration was the biggest driver of Alberta's expansion, contributing 0.24%, and natural increase added a robust 0.22%, while net interprovincial migration was responsible for a paltry 0.03%.

For most of the last five years, Alberta's growth has outpaced that of other provinces by a wide margin, but now the gap is closing. In the third quarter, four other provinces grew at rates of at least 0.40%: Manitoba (0.40%), Ontario (0.42%), British Columbia (0.44%) and Saskatchewan (0.46%).

Year-over-year, Alberta's growth of 1.68% led the provinces, coming in at almost double the national average (0.85%)[2] (Table 2). Over the year, Alberta added 69,835 new residents. Despite solid gains and province-leading rates, Alberta's growth continued to moderate off recent highs; this was the lowest third quarter year-over-year and quarterly growth since 2010 (Figure 1).

Migration

Migration continued to make a large contribution to Alberta's growth in the third quarter, although levels were down by half from the same period in 2012 and 2013. The third quarter saw 11,232 new Albertans arrive as migrants.

1 All data are from Statistics Canada. Estimates from 2007–2015 are based on the 2011 Census adjusted for net census undercount and incompletely enumerated Indian Reserves. All estimates are subject to revision.

2 This growth represents year-over-year variation (Oct. 1, 2014 to Oct. 1, 2015).

Table 1: Population & Growth Rates, Canada and Alberta

Population			Year over Year Growth Rate		
1-Oct	Canada	Alberta	1-Oct	Canada	Alberta
2010	34,131,451	3,747,504	2010	1.11%	1.43%
2011	34,472,289	3,812,231	2011	1.00%	1.73%
2012	34,882,488	3,918,141	2012	1.19%	2.78%
2013	35,293,166	4,040,578	2013	1.18%	3.12%
2014	35,681,588	4,147,040	2014	1.10%	2.63%
2015	35,985,751	4,216,875	2015	0.85%	1.68%

Figure 1: Alberta Components of Population Change, 3rd Quarter

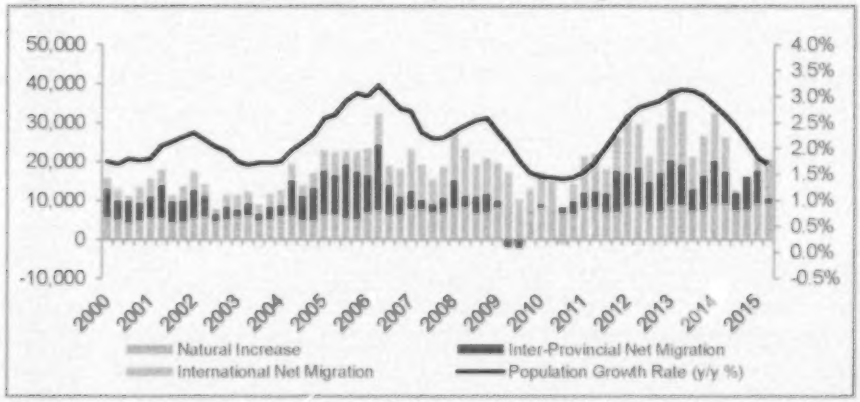

Table 2: Population of Provinces/Territories

	Population Oct. 1, 2015	Growth Rate (y/y)
Canada	35,985,751	0.85%
NL	528,190	-0.13%
PEI	146,679	0.13%
NS	945,121	0.15%
NB	754,164	-0.12%
QC	8,284,656	0.57%
ON	13,850,090	0.87%
MB	1,298,591	1.09%
SK	1,138,879	1.09%
AB	4,216,875	1.68%
BC	4,703,939	0.85%
YT	37,288	0.44%
NWT	44,253	0.25%
NVT	37,026	2.06%

Interprovincial migration

Interprovincial migration weakened dramatically this quarter to levels not seen since the last downturn in 2009-10. Alberta received only 1,234 net new residents from other parts of Canada, almost seven times lower than the same quarter last year. The largest net inflows to Alberta arrived from Quebec (1,204) and Ontario (1,014) (Map 1).

This is the first time in 20 quarters that Alberta has not led the country in interprovincial migration gains. British Columbia (6,315) far outstripped all other jurisdictions this quarter. Alberta and Ontario (1,207) were the only other regions with net gains (Table 3).

Alberta lost population to British Columbia for the sixth straight quarter, and the losses have been increasing in magnitude. At 2,316, the current outflow was twice as big as last quarter's loss. Over the past few years, Ontario has been a significant source of new residents to Alberta; however, this flow is weakening. Although Alberta still saw net gains from Ontario this quarter, these were down two-thirds compared with the same quarter last year. In addition, Alberta's net gains from the Atlantic Provinces were also weaker this quarter relative to the recent past (Table 3).

Net International Migration

Net international migration added 9,998 new residents to the province in the third quarter, up slightly from the same period last year. Unprecedented immigration levels were moderated by continued net outflows of non-permanent residents (NPR).

Alberta welcomed 13,982 immigrants between July and September, the province's highest number ever in a single quarter and nationally, second only to Ontario. At 18.0%, this quarter also saw the highest share on record of immigrants to Canada landing in Alberta.

The province has consistently captured double-digit shares of Canada's immigrants since 2009 and higher numbers of international arrivals have been an important driver of Alberta's robust population growth. While Alberta has been losing population to British Columbia through interprovincial migration as of late, the third quarter marks the seventh in a row that Alberta has attracted a larger number of immigrants than our neighbour.

Despite solid population gains through immigration, net international migration continues to be restrained by net outflows of NPRs. In the third quarter, Alberta registered a net loss of -2,406 NPRs. Although much smaller than the previous quarter's outflow (-7,711), this was the fourth quarter in a row of net losses while all other regions saw a net gain in NPRs this quarter. Year-over-year, almost 24,000 NPRs (net) have left the province.

Since temporary work permits usually expire at the end of the calendar year, net outflows of NPRs are common in the last quarter of the year. Changes to policies related to the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program have led to more sustained outflows than usual across the country over the past year. Alberta has been particularly affected because very large inflows over many years have resulted in large numbers of NPRs in the province; over 96,000 as of October 1, 2015, down from about 120,000 a year ago. Although the NPR category includes students and refugee claimants, the vast majority in Alberta are workers. The combination of policy changes, the economic downturn and a large number of TFWs in the province are the likely reasons behind the sustained net outflows of NPRs from Alberta.

Natural increase

Natural increase continues to be a strong driver of population growth in the province. In the third quarter of 2015, Alberta gained 9,186 net new residents through natural increase, the result of 15,128 births and 5,942 deaths. Nationally, Alberta had the highest natural growth rate of all the provinces this quarter (0.22%). With Alberta's slowing total net migration, natural increase is becoming increasingly important as a driver of Alberta's population growth.

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Map 1: Net Population Movement for Alberta July 1 to September 30, 2015

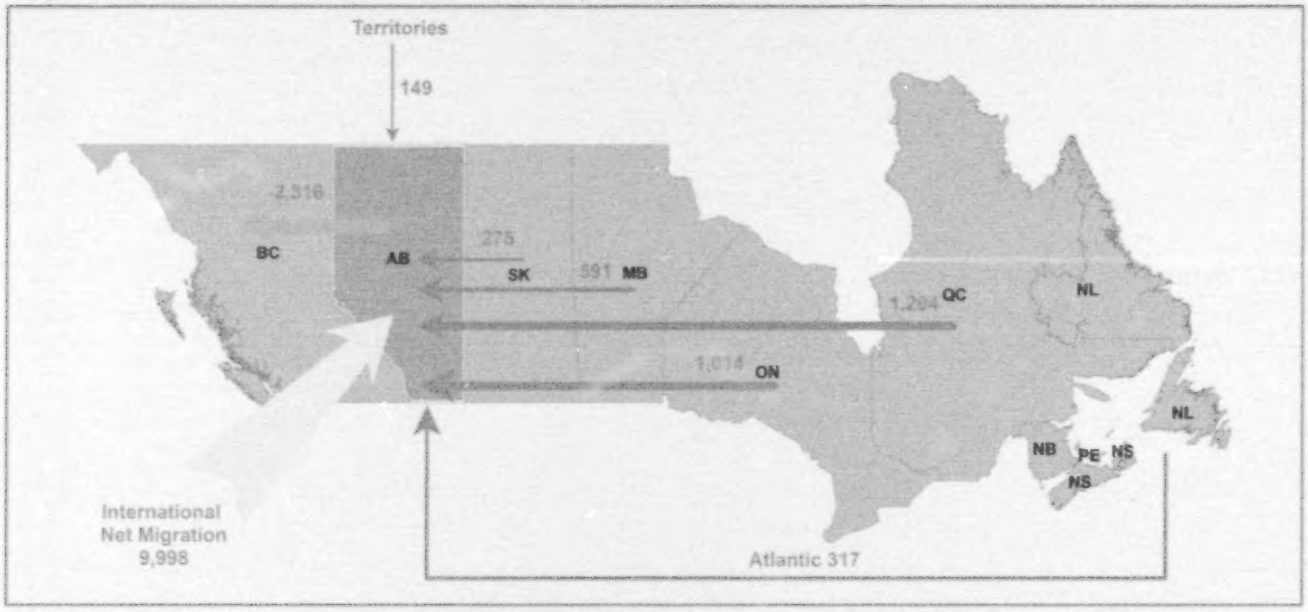

Table 3: Origin and Destination of Interprovincial Migrants July 1 to September 30, 2015

Origin \ Destination	NL	PEI	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NWT	NVT
NL	0	20	354	111	96	707	6	56	502	143	0	5	0
PEI	5	0	111	99	57	378	10	0	150	198	0	0	0
NS	290	93	0	632	229	1,747	164	162	1,211	526	7	25	14
NB	85	85	744	0	783	1,186	130	25	932	305	11	5	0
QC	90	15	133	432	0	6,442	93	216	2,136	1,090	0	64	24
ON	661	144	1,449	1,118	4,150	0	1,158	1,133	6,279	5,621	24	219	89
MB	45	9	81	34	125	1,888	0	543	1,489	1,325	0	19	16
SK	4	8	82	28	146	1,223	524	0	2,396	1,166	9	11	10
AB	704	244	916	614	932	5,265	898	2,121	0	7,986	85	187	39
BC	70	5	519	110	500	4,105	621	680	5,670	0	164	46	14
YT	6	0	11	0	36	95	6	0	156	281	0	38	0
NWT	12	31	45	3	16	65	18	32	277	137	10	0	20
NVT	0	0	62	13	17	151	9	0	27	43	9	12	0

	NL	PEI	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NWT	NVT
IN	1,972	654	4,507	3,194	7,097	23,252	3,637	4,968	21,225	18,821	319	633	226
OUT	2,000	1,008	5,100	4,301	10,735	22,045	5,574	5,607	19,991	12,506	629	666	343
NET	-28	-354	-593	-1,107	-3,638	1,207	-1,937	-639	1,234	6,315	-310	-33	-117

Q3 2015	NL	PEI	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NWT	NVT
Outflow to AB	502	150	1,211	932	2,136	6,279	1,489	2,396	0	5,670	156	277	27
Inflow from AB	704	244	916	614	932	5,265	898	2,121	0	7,986	85	187	39
Net Flow to AB	-202	-94	295	318	1,204	1,014	591	275	0	-2,316	71	90	-12

Table 4: Alberta Components of Growth by Quarter

Quarters in Census Year	Interprovincial Migration			International Migration						Total	Vital Events		Total
	In	Out	Net	Immigrants	Net Non-Permanent Residents	Emigrants	Net Temporary Emigrants	Returning Emigrants	Net	Total Net Migration	Births	Deaths	Sum of Components
2011-12													
Jul-Sep	22,147	18,189	3,958	8,970	2,665	3,005	675	1,840	9,795	13,753	13,404	5,117	22,040
Oct-Dec	15,797	10,901	4,896	7,690	21	1,613	549	800	6,349	11,245	12,223	5,358	18,110
Jan-Mar	22,632	12,201	10,431	7,520	2,568	1,554	531	792	8,795	19,226	12,737	5,711	26,252
Apr-Jun	26,008	17,641	8,367	10,386	5,421	1,689	531	1,444	15,031	23,398	13,866	5,305	31,959
Total	86,584	58,932	27,652	34,566	10,675	7,861	2,286	4,876	39,970	67,622	52,230	21,491	98,361
2012-13													
Jul-Sep	25,552	15,767	9,785	9,086	3,720	2,823	663	1,953	11,273	21,058	13,851	5,320	29,589
Oct-Dec	15,730	8,026	7,704	9,103	-1,321	1,476	532	740	6,514	14,218	12,653	5,575	21,296
Jan-Mar	21,438	11,692	9,746	8,095	5,860	1,537	545	703	12,576	22,322	13,182	5,941	29,563
Apr-Jun	29,833	18,470	11,363	10,582	8,803	1,657	545	1,351	18,534	29,897	14,366	5,517	38,748
Total	92,553	53,955	38,598	36,866	17,062	7,493	2,285	4,747	48,897	87,495	54,054	22,353	119,196
2013-2014													
Jul-Sep	25,511	15,277	10,234	9,156	6,166	2,853	663	1,953	13,759	23,993	14,373	5,536	32,830
Oct-Dec	16,387	10,900	5,487	8,806	846	1,492	532	740	8,368	13,855	13,138	5,797	21,196
Jan-Mar	22,290	13,522	8,768	10,351	1,434	1,554	545	703	10,389	19,157	13,676	6,173	26,660
Apr-Jun	31,613	20,720	10,893	12,753	522	1,675	545	1,351	12,406	23,299	14,891	5,727	32,463
Total	95,801	60,419	35,382	41,066	8,968	7,574	2,285	4,747	44,922	80,304	56,078	23,233	113,149
2014-2015													
Jul-Sep	23,192	15,055	8,137	10,283	172	2,869	662	1,953	8,877	17,014	14,874	5,745	26,143
Oct-Dec	15,269	11,031	4,238	9,150	-7,032	1,500	532	740	826	5,064	13,538	6,012	12,590
Jan-Mar	23,944	15,662	8,282	8,197	-6,644	1,564	545	703	147	8,429	14,046	6,404	16,071
Apr-Jun	31,293	23,029	8,264	11,799	-7,711	1,686	545	1,351	3,208	11,472	15,219	5,935	20,756
Total	93,698	64,777	28,921	39,429	-21,215	7,619	2,284	4,747	13,058	41,979	57,677	24,096	75,560
2015-2016													
Jul-Sep	21,225	19,991	1,234	13,982	-2,406	2,869	662	1,953	9,998	11,232	15,128	5,942	20,418
Oct-Dec	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Jan-Mar	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Apr-Jun	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	21,225	19,991	1,234	13,982	-2,406	2,869	662	1,953	9,998	11,232	15,128	5,942	20,418